



Washington Weekly

January 28, 2008



U. S. Congresswoman
CAROLYN CHEEKS KILPATRICK

13TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF MICHIGAN

This e-newsletter summarizes events taking place in the U. S. Congress that affect the State of Michigan, with particular emphasis on Michigan's 13th Congressional District. A printable version of this e-newsletter will also be available on my website: www.house.gov/kilpatrick.

Hill Highlights

Legislative Action for 1/14/08 through 1/25/08

H.R. 4986/National Defense Authorization Act – Disappointed that a number of critical provisions needed to support our troops were delayed by the President's veto of this legislation, Congress acted quickly to re-send the Defense Authorization Act to the President's desk. This new bill authorizes the President to issue national security waivers of the provision for claims arising out of terrorist acts committed or materially supported by Saddam Hussein's regime. The slightly revised bill also includes provisions ensuring that the military pay raise, as well as special pays and bonuses for the troops, are retroactive to January 1. This measure helps restore our nation's military readiness by creating a \$1 billion Strategic Readiness Fund to address equipment shortfalls, fully funding the Army's and Marine Corps' equipment reset requirements and authorizing \$980 million to provide the National Guard and Reserve critically needed equipment. It protects our troops in harm's way by authorizing \$17.6 billion, an increase of \$865 million, for additional MRAPs, \$4.8 billion for anti-IED efforts, \$3.3 billion for up-armored Humvees, \$1.5 billion for add-on armor for other vehicles, and \$1.2 billion for body armor. The measure supports our troops and their families by giving the military a pay raise larger than requested by the President, prohibiting fee increases in TRICARE and the TRICARE pharmacy program, and strengthening benefits for the troops and their families. It includes the Wounded Warrior Act, which improves the care of troops returning from Iraq and addresses many of the issues raised by the Dole-Shalala Commission by implementing several of its recommendations. The bill also improves accountability and cracks down on waste, fraud, and abuse in contracting, including requiring new steps to manage and oversee contracts in Iraq and Afghanistan and detailed regulations for private security contractors, such as Blackwater employees, mandating the appropriate use of force. Congresswoman Kilpatrick supported this legislation, which passed the House by a vote of 369 to 46.

H.R. 3524/HOPE VI Improvement and Reauthorization Act – The HOPE VI program revitalizes severely distressed and obsolete public housing projects. Since its establishment in 1992, the HOPE VI program has awarded 237 grants to 127 cities. This legislation reauthorizes the program for eight years, authorizing \$800 million a year. The measure requires that all public housing units proposed for demolition or disposition under a HOPE VI project be replaced on a one-for-one basis and requires public housing agencies to monitor and track all households affected by HOPE VI revitalization plans. The bill also provides for the active involvement and participation of residents in the grant planning process, including public hearings and four notices to residents on the intent to apply for a HOPE VI grant; grant award and relocation options; grant agreement and relocation options; and replacement housing. Finally, the bill establishes performance benchmarks to ensure the timely completion of HOPE VI grants and provides penalties for grantees that do not meet these performance benchmarks. The Congresswoman voted in support of this legislation, which passed by a vote of 271 to 130.

H.R. 2768/Supplemental Mine Improvement & New Emergency Response Act – Despite significant progress over the last several decades, mining is one of

Act – Despite significant progress over the last several decades, mining is one of the most dangerous jobs in America. Mining fatalities occur at a rate more than seven times the average for all private industries, exceeding other dangerous occupations such as construction and trucking. This legislation builds upon the MINER Act of 2006, which focused on post-mining accident actions. This bill helps prevent mining accidents and illnesses from arising in the first place by providing a comprehensive approach to improve the safety of America’s miners, including preventing mining disasters, improving emergency response, and reducing long-term health risks. Congresswoman Kilpatrick supported this measure, which passed the House by a vote of 214 to 199.

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[Michigan's 13th Congressional District](#)



H.R. 3963/SCHIP Veto Override — This bipartisan legislation would provide health care to 10 million children. In December, the existing SCHIP program was extended until March 2009, but without this legislation, 3.8 million additional low-income children who are eligible but not enrolled will not be covered under the program. More than 118,500 children in Michigan currently receive care through SCHIP. The bipartisan plan vetoed by the President would have extended care to an additional Michigan children who are currently uninsured. Congresswoman Kilpatrick voted to support this legislation; however, this attempt to override the President’s veto did not pass the House. This measure, which required a two-thirds majority, failed by a vote of 260 to 152. Congresswoman Kilpatrick will continue fighting to provide health insurance for America’s children.

To read more about these measures or any other legislation, please visit the Library of Congress’ legislative information site at <http://thomas.loc.gov/>.

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